United Nations A/73/411

General Assembly

Distr.: General
5 October 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Agenda items 126, 135 and 136

United Nations reform: measures and proposals

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: comparative assessment of human resources structures

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: comparative assessment of human resources structures" (A/73/366). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 21 September 2018.

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that in his initial report on management reform the Secretary-General set out a series of proposals, including the replacement of the existing Department of Management and Department of Field Support with two new departments, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support (A/72/492, para. 79). In paragraph 4 of its resolution 72/266 A, the General Assembly stated that it looked forward to receiving a comprehensive report on the proposals for its consideration.

3. Pursuant to resolution 72/266 A, the Secretary-General submitted a report entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: implementing a new management architecture for improved effectiveness and strengthened accountability" (A/72/492/Add.2). With regard to the proposals of the Secretary-General regarding human resources functions, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in its related report (A/72/7/Add.49, para. 34), it stated that it was not convinced of the effectiveness of the proposed separation of those functions among the Office of Human Resources of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Human Resources Services Division of the Department of Operational Support. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to consider consolidating human resources functions

18-16632 (E) 051018

Please recycle

under a single administrative structure, with a view to ensuring a unified approach, optimizing the distribution of functions and avoiding duplication.

4. In its resolution 72/266 B, the General Assembly decided to approve the reorganization of the Department of Management and Department of Field Support into the proposed new Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and Department of Operational Support (para. 13) and approved the proposed new subsections 29A to 29D of section 29, Management and support services, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (para. 17; see also para. 10 below). The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit at the main part of its seventy-third session, for its consideration and decision, a comparative assessment of placing human resources functions in a single consolidated department or two distinct departments, with a view to ensuring a unified approach, optimizing the distribution of functions and avoiding duplication (para. 16).

5. The current report of the Secretary-General is submitted in response to the above-mentioned request. The Secretary-General discusses therein the existing structures at Headquarters, current challenges and structural approaches to addressing those challenges. With regard to the comparative assessment of human resources structures, information on the single structure approach is provided in paragraphs 21 and 22 and on the dual structure in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the report. **The Advisory Committee notes that the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General remains general in nature. Accordingly, the Committee trusts that full details on a comparative assessment of placing human resources functions in a single consolidated department or two distinct departments will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report. This should include further information on the coordination mechanisms to ensure effective feedback between the policy and operational functions, as well as on the entry point for Member States to discuss issues related to human resources policies and their implementation.**

6. In his report, the Secretary-General also discusses delegation of authority and accountability issues as they relate to his management reform proposals. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its report (A/72/885) on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Seventh progress report on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat: strengthening the accountability system of the Secretariat under the new management paradigm" (A/72/773), it made a number of observations and recommendations, including requests for further clarification, on the proposals of the Secretary-General for delegation of authority and accountability. The General Assembly, in its resolution 72/303, endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Committee's report. **The Advisory Committee trusts that further information on these issues will be provided to the General Assembly in the context of the next progress report of the Secretary-General on accountability.**

7. In its resolution 72/266 B, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution and to report thereon at the main part of its seventy-fifth session. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the above-mentioned comprehensive review should include an in-depth assessment of the effectiveness of the coordination and feedback mechanisms in place between the policy and operational functions, as well as the extent to which the needs of all Secretariat entities are being met and are properly reflected in human resources policies, procedures and processes.**

8. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in section IV, paragraph 4, of its resolution 72/262 C, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a new proposal for the global service delivery model no later than at the first resumed part

of its seventy-third session. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that a new model for the delivery of administrative services could have an impact on the functioning and structures of the human resources function, as well as on delegation of authority and accountability issues.**

9. The Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to take note of his report on the comparative assessment of human resources structures. **In view of the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 B (para. 16), the Advisory Committee considers that it is for the Assembly to decide on the action to be taken on the report of the Secretary-General.**

10. On a related matter, the Advisory Committee notes that no revision has been made to the introductory part of section 29 of the programme budget for 2018–2019 and trusts that the Secretary-General will make an appropriate proposal in this regard to the General Assembly.